

Apache County – Crooked Nail Trail Planning Committee Meeting
February 9, 2017 Town of Eagar Town Hall 1 pm to 3 pm

MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA

- WELCOME AND CALL MEETING TO ORDER
- INTRODUCTIONS
- OLD BUSINESS
- GRANT AGREEMENT
SURVEY
LAND OWNERSHIP
- NEW BUSINESS
- IMPACTS ON CURRENT PROPOSED ROUTES
DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES
RANKING OF ROUTES
REPORTS
- Crooked Nail Planning Committee meetings have been determined to be subject to the Open Meeting law, so now they will be formally announced by Apache County, Eagar and other participating entities
 - An agenda will be posted prior to each meeting
 - A roster of those who have been appointed to serve on the committee needs to be developed
 - Minutes must be made publically available within 3 business days – these will continue to be posted on the project website

INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees: Jeremiah Loyd, Adam Milnor, Debra Seeley (partial attendance), Devin Brown, Ron Shepard, Ben Dugdale, Diane Tilton, Kyle Trujillo, Jesse Reeck

OLD BUSINESS

A review of follow up items from the previous two Crooked Nail Trail planning meetings was held.

January 2017 meeting

- The focus of the January 12th meeting was a discussion of connecting a potential trail to Eagar, especially between Becker Lake and 260
 - Debra Seeley (Town of Eagar) identified general land ownership between these destinations for discussion
- The question was raised about who can complete cultural surveys required for any ROW across state lands. The state maintains an approved vendor list for this service.

December 2016

- Endangered Species Act concerns were raised to committee members, including possible impact to listed species in the Colorado River
 - Adam Milnor (National Park Service) contacted Shaula Hedwall (US Fish and Wildlife Service Supervisory Biologist in Flagstaff) to provide general information about the project. USFWS indicated the project is not likely to adversely affect the Little Colorado River Spinedace and no other species were identified for consideration.

River Route Feasibility

- Eagar contacted a surveyor about conducting a survey on the County Road 4162: a previous survey indicates that the current County Road 4162 ROW intersects State Land, which may provide a route for a public trail

GRANT AGREEMENT

Arizona State Parks Grant Agreement update

- On December 21, Jeremiah Loyd (Town of Eagar) and Adam Milnor met with AZ State Parks (ASP) and AZ State Land Department (AZLD) to discuss the project including the OHV grant
- There is now a fully executed grant agreement for the \$296k OHV state parks
 - \$35k was made available for cultural surveys and other planning work
 - Funds will not be spent until the trail location has been identified and the Intergovernmental Agreement has been approved
- Guidance on conducting a cultural resource survey was also provided by the ASLD, including a recommendation to survey a larger corridor (i.e. 50') than the anticipated ROW request (which will be 15')

NEW BUSINESS

- The Intergovernmental Agreement was on the agenda of the February 7 Board of Supervisors meeting, but was postponed for a future meeting
 - BOS approval of the IGA is a key step for progress on the project
- Jaqueline Holm (Arizona State Trust Land, rangeland administrator in Flagstaff) contacted Jeremiah Loyd and asked to be invited to future meetings.
- A public meeting was tentatively scheduled for March 9, but that has been postponed pending BOS direction

IMPACTS ON CURRENT PROPOSED ROUTES

DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES

RANKING OF ROUTES

- Concerns of Apache County residents, including ranchers holding State Trust land grazing allotments, were passed to the planning team from Apache County Supervisor Doyel Shamley
 - Concerns include maintenance, law enforcement, liability and natural and cultural resource damage
 - A letter was written from Shamley for planning committee consideration regarding these concerns
 - There was encouragement to look at alternative routes, including those that may not connect to St Johns
 - Another alternative is evaluate a portion of the River Route from Springerville to Road 4162
- There was a discussion, per direction from the County Supervisor, about the feasibility of an alternative route that involves National Forest land. The discussion did not discuss a particular route. However, it did identify the following preliminary considerations.
 - *Pros:* Potentially more scenic and more attractive for users; connects to existing systems; connects to Eagar; connects to Navajo County
 - *Cons:* Does not include or connect St. Johns; not within the current OHV grant that has been secured and may put it at risk; likely to have increased complexity with endangered species;

would require NEPA analysis, resulting in additional costs; uncertainty around tribal engagement/consultation; longer trail planning and analysis process at the federal level (likely 36 to 48 months)

- Ben (Apache County) emphasized that the project has been evaluating multiple route alignments under several considerations, especially keeping it to state land and not private land
 - Willing to revisit the assumption that the trail connects to St Johns
- The current routes were not ranked in numerical order. A feasibility document from September 2016 was discussed that outlines the pros and cons of each route under consideration.

REPORTS

- Public and Elected Official Engagement
 - *Proposal* – county employees on the committee (Ben and Devin) will discuss the Crooked Nail Trail project with the County supervisors in February, and identify that the River Route as a viable option identified by the planning team but others are still under consideration
 - The group reached agreement on this proposal – Ben D. and Devin B. will schedule a briefing with BOS supervisors
 - Adam Milnor will provide a project summary of planning work done to date.

The Meeting was adjourned at 3:02 pm

Next meeting:

Thursday, March 9 : 1 to 3 pm Eagar Town Hall